

# Use of chronic disease management tools

Chronic diseases continue to emerge as considerable challenges to health care systems worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Canada is no exception, as the results from the 2010 National Physician Survey (NPS) show that chronic diseases substantially contribute to the increased demands on physicians' time. Increased complexity of their patient case loads is the most frequently cited factor (reported by 76% of FPs), followed by management of patients with chronic conditions (73%).

A variety of tools have been developed to help primary care providers manage chronic conditions. According to the 2010 NPS, more than a quarter of FPs have summary information on chronic condition prevalence for their patient population. Flow sheets and checklists are used by 46% of FPs. More than half of the physicians who do not have or use flow sheets and checklists indicate that these tools would be beneficial to their practices (Figure 1).

In addition to these tools, FPs report that they provide written instructions for patients with chronic diseases, explaining how patients can manage their own

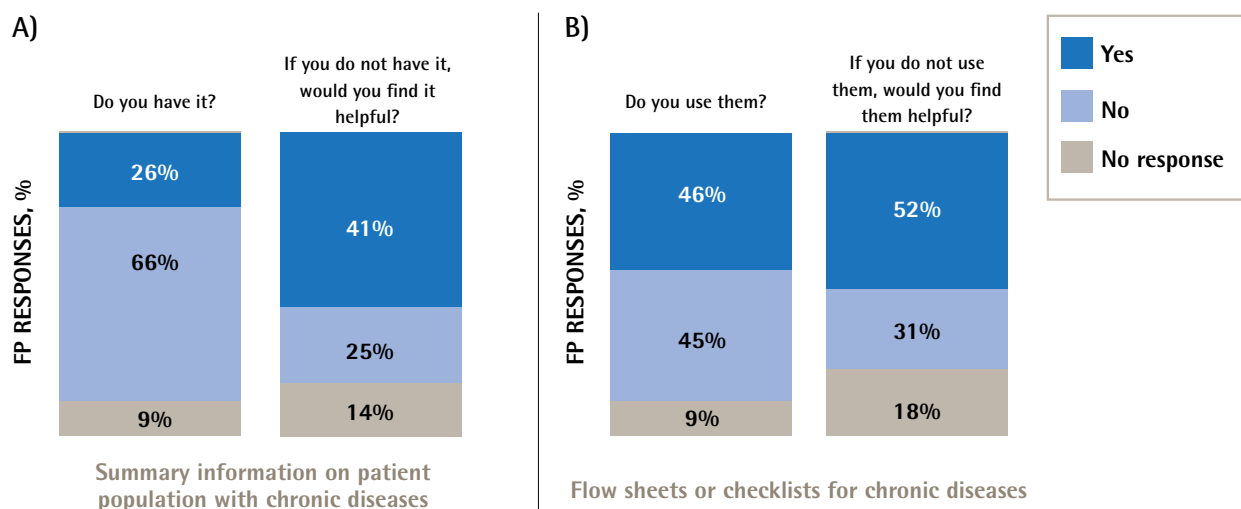
care at home: 20% of FPs do so routinely, and 45% provide written instructions occasionally. Among the electronic tools used by FPs in managing patients with chronic diseases, electronic medical records are the most popular (used by 27% of FPs), followed by websites (17%), online chronic disease management forms (7%), and e-mail (3%). It is reasonable to expect that as electronic tools become more commonplace, the prevalence of their use in chronic disease care will rise accordingly.

The NPS is a collaborative project of the College of Family Physicians of Canada, the Canadian Medical Association, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Additional results are available at [www.nationalphysiciansurvey.ca](http://www.nationalphysiciansurvey.ca). If you would like the opportunity to develop and write a future Fast Fact using the NPS results, please contact **Artem Safarov**, National Physician Survey Project Manager, at 800 387-6197, extension 242, or [artem@cfpc.ca](mailto:artem@cfpc.ca).

## Reference

1. Dorland J, McColl MA, editors. *Emerging approaches to chronic disease management in primary health care*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's Press; 2007.

**Figure 1. Use of CDM tools: A) Percentage of FPs' responses to questions about having summary information on their patient population with chronic diseases; B) Percentage of FPs' responses to questions about their use of flow sheets or checklists.**



CDM—chronic disease management.